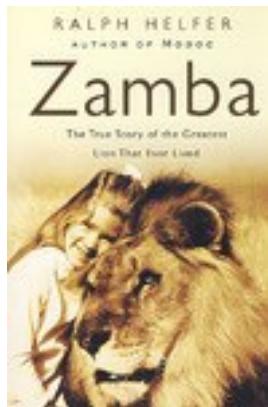


# Zamba



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出版者:2005-09-29 (2005年8月4日)

出版时间:2005-9

装帧:平装

isbn:9780060836276

Legendary Hollywood animal trainer and behaviorist Helfer captures an incredible story of love between man and lion that displays all the qualities that made his previous book, *Modoc: The True Story of the Greatest Elephant That Ever Lived*, so moving. Here Helfer is involved with the subject, which adds emotional depth to a lifelong adventure. Starting with his somewhat brutal childhood on Chicago's South Side, the author deftly develops his story of the spiritual harmony he finds in nature and the violence he sees in the film industry's use of animals. His unique bond with a lion cub he names Zamba grows into a lifetime relationship that includes countless guest stints in movies and television shows, and leads to Helfer's development of a system of animal training "based on love, not fear," called "affection training." It "has revolutionized the way animals are trained and treated in the motion picture industry." The heart of the book is an account of Helfer's trip to Africa to assist Zamba with a starring role in *The Lion*, where the author's bond with his lion becomes a true spiritual connection that will touch the heart of any animal lover. 8 pages of b&w photos not seen by PW.

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Adult/High School--From a young age, Helfer had a way with animals and an urge to work with them. After an inauspicious start as a teen helper in a Los Angeles pet store, he gradually acquired animals that movie studios used in their productions. He was the first Hollywood animal trainer to use affection rather than fear. He showed that his method worked better, and now, of course, it has become commonly accepted. He even turned an orphaned lion cub into a vegetarian for a brief period, to test a theory. Over the years, Zamba appeared in many movies and television commercials and shows, riding to jobs in the back of Helfer's station wagon, uncaged. The author reminds readers that wild animals are never thoroughly predictable and are not house pets; even Zamba surprised him occasionally, although never in a dangerous way. The special bond between these two mammals; Helfer's ideas about animal-human communication and understanding; and the many stories, both humorous and touching, make this a fascinating book.--Judy McAloon, Potomac Library, Prince William County, VA

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Growing up on Chicago's South Side, Helfer always dreamed of animals. When his family moved to California, he got a job at a pet store that occasionally rented animals to Hollywood studios. He began to train animals for the movies. In the 1950s, when he started in the business, most animals were trained with a combination of fear and harsh discipline. Helfer believed that animals were better trained with affection, and he successfully trained young animals by raising them in an environment where he was their parent. But lions were what he had always dreamed of, so when he got the chance to rear a lion cub, he jumped at the chance. Zamba became the "go to" lion for Hollywood, and Helfer tells many stories of Zamba on the set. A warmhearted tale of love between two species. Nancy Bent

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"A fascinating book ... humorous and touching." -- School Library Journal

"A warmhearted tale of love between two species." -- Booklist

"An incredible story of love between man and lion ... moving... will touch the heart of any animal lover." -- Publishers Weekly

"Extraordinary ... Beautifully expresses a simple philosophy so many have trouble following: respect for all living creatures, given and returned." -- Kirkus Reviews

"Wonderful, detailed... amusing... ZAMBA is a charming read." -- People

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